

Caribou/Snowmobile Aerial Monitoring Report

Of April 24, 2013

Methods

The aerial monitoring program is conducted as a cooperative program between the Kalispel Tribe, the Defenders of Wildlife, and the Selkirk Conservation Alliance.

An aerial over-flight was conducted of the Southern Selkirk Mountains woodland caribou recovery area to monitor snowmobile user compliance with existing snowmobile use restrictions and to monitor and locate caribou and other important wildlife use areas in relation to areas with snowmobile use restrictions. To conduct aerial monitoring a Cessna 182 fixed wing type aircraft was utilized.

To accurately locate boundaries of areas with snowmobile use restrictions in place, a laptop computer running a geographical information-mapping program (Arc view ver. 3.3) was utilized. In addition to mapping software, the existing arc view extension, DNR gamin, was utilized to connect a handheld GPS system to computer for real-time mapping. In addition to a pilot, a single observer/recorder was utilized. Because of the conditions of the community airport at Priest River, the monitoring flight originated and ended at the community airport in Priest River, Idaho.

Conditions

Weather conditions were clear within the very southern portion of the survey area with high cloud cover and moderate turbulence that diminished during the duration of the survey flight. Temperatures ranged about 25 to 35 degrees Fahrenheit within the survey area, no wind. The flight originated and concluded from the community airport in Priest River Idaho. The flight began at approximately 1000 and ended at approximately 1400; total flight time was approximately 4.1 hours. A map of the flight path is shown in Figure 1.

Results

Cow Creek, Phoebe's tip, Trapper Creek. Snowmobile use was documented with the closed area in headwaters of Cow Creek and all along ridge system from Phoebe's Tip to Trapper Peak and into the upper portion of Grass Creek.

Wildlife

Observed several sets of bear tracks within Hughes Meadow, notability along the eastern and northern edges.

Tim Layser
Wildlife Biologist
Selkirk Conservation Alliance

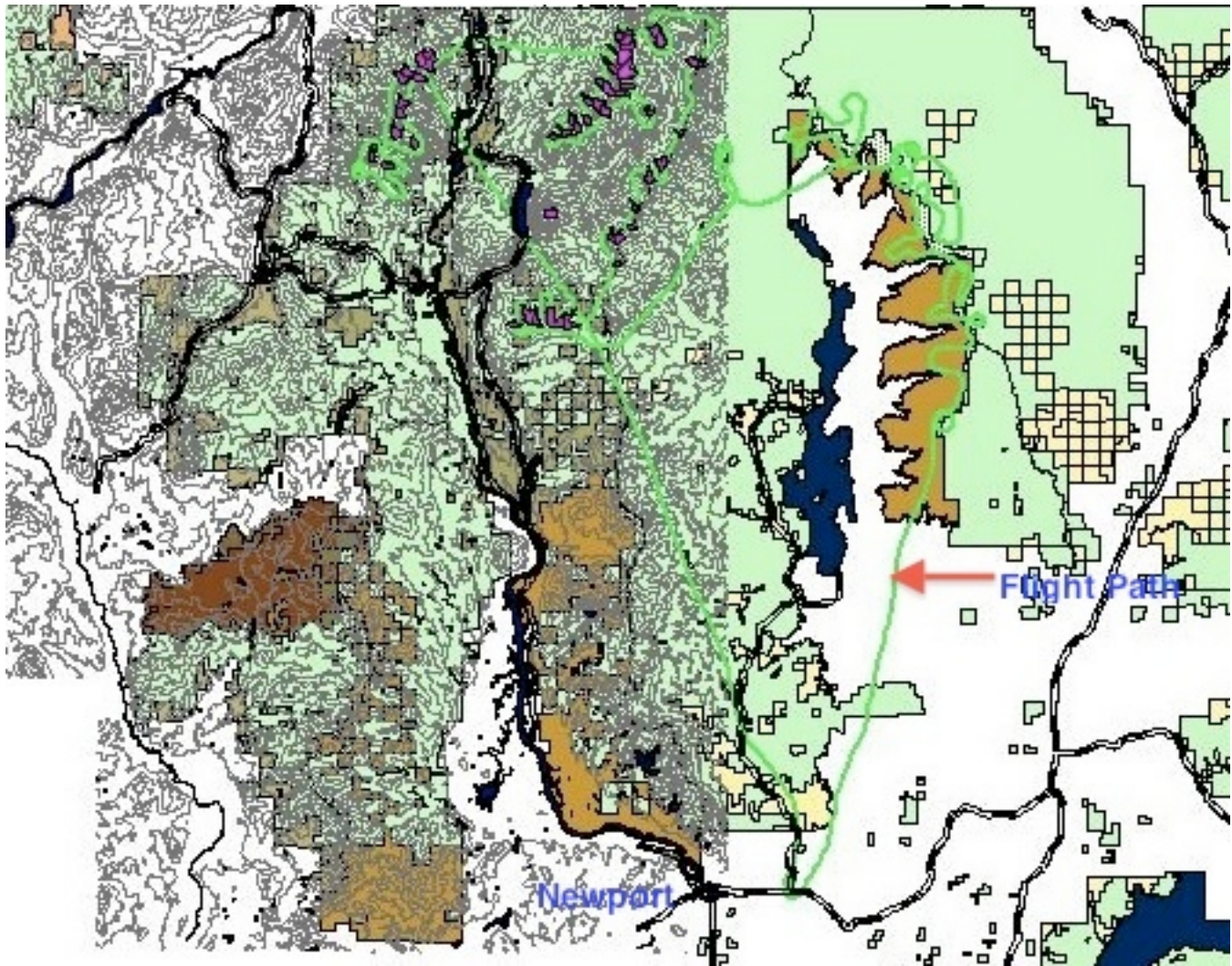


Figure 1. Map of southern portion of caribou recovery area, showing flight path (4/24/2013) taken in green.

